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About the middle of the next night, two fire ships were fitted out by the Russians, which were led into the bay by Admiral Gregg, under a very galling fire from four Turkish vessels. One of these fine ships burned ineffectually, owing to the officers not understanding the language of the crew. The other succeeded perfectly, first setting fire to the four vessels which guarded the mouth of the harbour, and suc-

cessively to the whole Turkish fleet, excepting five galleys which were saved with difficulty, and fell into the hands of the Russians.

The above pleased me when I read it, and may perhaps please others. I suppose the work is translated, if so, this very bad extract, rather than translation, may lead to the part of the book, if the Belfast Magazine thinks it worthy of notice.

Killileagh, March 23d, 1814.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND LABOURS
OF THE COUNT DE FOURCROY; AB-
STRACTED FROM THE EULOGY DE-
LIVERED BY CUVIER IN THE IM-
PERIAL INSTITUTE.

ANTOINE Francois de Fourcroy, Count of the French Empire, Counsellor of State, Commander of the Legion of Honour, Member of the Imperial Institute, and of most scientific societies in Europe, Professor of Chemistry at the Museum of Natural History, Professor of the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, and Teacher in the Polytechnic School, was born at Paris on the 15th June, 1755. His family had long resided in the capital, and several of his ancestors had distinguished themselves at the bar.

His father exercised in Paris the trade of an apothecary, in consequence of an office which he held in the house of the Duke of Orleans; but the Corporation of Apothecaries having obtained the general suppression of all such offices, he was obliged to renounce his employment; and his son grew up in the midst of poverty produced by this monopoly of the privileged bodies

in Paris. He felt this situation the more keenly, because he possessed from nature an extreme sensibility of temper. When he lost his mother, at the age of seven years, he attempted to throw himself into her grave; and the care of an elder sister alone preserved him, till he reached the age at which it was usual to be sent to the college. Here he met with a brutal master, who conceived an aversion to him, and treated him with cruelty. The consequence was a dislike to study, and he quitted the college at the age of fourteen, less informed than when he went to it. He now endeavoured to support himself as a writing-master. He had even some thoughts of going upon the stage; but the advice of Viquet d'Azyr, induced him to commence the study of medicine.

This great anatomist was an acquaintance of the elder Fourcroy. Struck with the appearance of his son, and the courage with which he struggled against fortune, he conceived an affection for him, and promised to direct his studies, and assist him during their progress. The study of medicine to a man in his situation, was by no means an easy

task. He was obliged to lodge in a garret, so low in the roof that he could only stand upright in the centre of the room. Beside him lodged a water-carrier, with a family of twelve children. Fourcroy acted as physician to this numerous family; and, as payment, was supplied with abundance of water. He contrived, however, to support himself by giving lessons to other students, by facilitating the researches of wealthier writers, and by some translations which he sold to a bookseller. For these latter he was paid but half, but the same bookseller offered, thirty years afterwards, to make up the deficiency, when his author had become *Director General of Public Instruction*.

Fourcroy studied with so much zeal and ardour, that he soon became acquainted with the entire science of medicine. But this did not answer his purpose. It was necessary to get a doctor's degree; and the expenses amounted to £ 250 sterling. An old physician, Dr. Diest, had left funds to the faculty to confer a gratuitous degree and license, every two years, on the poor student who should best deserve them. Fourcroy was the most conspicuous of this description at that time in Paris; and he would therefore have reaped the benefit of this benevolent legacy, had it not been for the unlucky situation in which he was placed. A quarrel existed between the faculty charged with the education of medical men who granted degrees, and a society recently established by government for the improvement of the medical art. This dispute was carried to a great length, and had attracted the attention of the frivolous and idle inhabitants of Paris. Viq. d'Azyr was secretary to the society, and of course one of its most active champions, and was in consequence par-

ticularly obnoxious to the faculty of medicine. Fourcroy was unluckily the acknowledged *protege* of this eminent anatomist, and this was sufficient to induce the faculty of medicine to refuse him the gratuitous degree. He would have been excluded in consequence from entering upon the career of medicine, had not the society, enraged at this treatment, and influenced by violent party-spirit, formed a subscription and contributed the necessary expences.

It was not possible to refuse M. de Fourcroy the degree of Doctor, when he was enabled to pay for it; but above the simple degree of Doctor, there was a higher one, that of *Docteur Regent*, which depending on the votes of the faculty, it was unanimously refused. This violent and unjust conduct of the faculty of medicine, made a deep impression on the mind of Fourcroy, and contributed not a little, by his subsequent influence, to the downfall of that powerful body.

Being thus entitled to practise in Paris, his success depended entirely upon the reputation which he could establish. For this purpose he devoted himself to the sciences connected with medicine, as the shortest and most certain road by which he could reach his object. His first writings shewed no predilection for any particular branch of science. He wrote indifferently upon chemistry, anatomy, and on natural history. He published an *Abridgment of the History of Insects*, and a *Description of the Bursa Mucosa of the Tendons*. This last piece gave him the greatest celebrity: for in 1785, he was admitted, in consequence, into the Academy of Sciences as an anatomist; but the reputation of Bucquet, which at that time was very high, gradually led him to direct his principal attention to chemistry, and he

retained this predilection during the remainder of his life, becoming the first and most celebrated chemist of his age.

Bucquet was at that time professor of chemistry in the medical school of Paris, and was greatly celebrated and followed, on account of his eloquence. Fourcroy became in the first place his pupil, and soon after his particular friend. One day when an unforeseen illness prevented him from lecturing as usual, he entreated M. de Fourcroy to supply his place. He at first declined, and alleged his total ignorance of the method of addressing a popular audience. But, overcome by the persuasions of Bucquet, he consented; and in this first essay, spoke two hours without disorder or hesitation, and acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his whole audience. Bucquet soon after substituted him in his place, and it was in his laboratory and in his classroom, that Fourcroy first made himself acquainted with chemistry. He was enabled at the death of Bucquet, in consequence of an advantageous marriage, to purchase the apparatus and cabinet of his master; and although the faculty of medicine would not allow him to succeed to the chair of Bucquet, they could not prevent him succeeding to his reputation.

There was a college established in the King's garden, which was at that time under the superintendence of Buffon, and Macquer was the professor of chemistry in this institution. On the death of this chemist, in 1784, Lavoisier stood candidate for the chair. But Buffon receiving more than a hundred letters in favour of Fourcroy, and the voice of the public was so loud in his favour, that he was appointed to the situation, in spite of the high reputation of his opponent, and the su-

perior interest that resulted from his fortune and situation in life.

Fourcroy continued professor at the *Jardin des Plantes*, during the remainder of his life, which lasted twenty-five years; and such was his eloquence, or so well was it fitted to the taste of the French nation, that his celebrity as a lecturer continued always upon the increase; so great also were the crowds that flocked to hear him, that it became necessary to enlarge the lecture-room.*

He was elected a member of the National Convention in the autumn of 1792. That assembly, and France herself, were in a state of terror, produced by a vile conspiracy of despots to subjugate the country and overturn the government; and so sanguinary was the executive committee, that it was almost as dangerous for the members of the Convention to remain silent, as to take any active part in the business of that assembly. Fourcroy notwithstanding his reputation for eloquence, and the love of fame which appears to have been his prevailing passion, had prudence enough not to open his mouth in the Convention till after the death of Robespierre. This is the more to be wondered at, as it is well known that he took a warm part in favour of the revolution, and that he was a determined enemy to the order of things from which he had suffered so severely at his entrance into life.

He had influence enough to save the lives of some men of merit, till at last his own life was threatened,

* His style was precisely similar to that of his books, flowing and harmonious, but very diffuse, and destitute of precision; and his manner was that of a *petit maitre*, mixed with a good deal of pomposity, and an affectation of profundity.

and his influence of course utterly annihilated.

After the 9th Thermidor, 1794, when the nation was wearied with destruction, and when efforts were making to restore those institutions of science and education, which, during the reaction of the revolution, had been overturned and destroyed, Fourcroy was particularly active in this period of renovation, *and it is to him chiefly that the entire system of schools established in France for the education of youth are to be ascribed.* The Convention had destroyed all the collèges, universities, and academies throughout France. Three new schools were therefore founded for educating medical men, nobly endowed, and connected with the University of Paris. The term Schools of Medicine was however proscribed as reviving the detested ancient customs, and they were distinguished by the appellation of Schools of Health. The Polytechnic School was next instituted, as a kind of preparation for the military profession, where young men could be instructed in mathematics and natural philosophy, to qualify them for entering the schools of the artillery, the engineers, and of navigation. The central schools was another institution for which France is indebted to the efforts of Fourcroy. The idea was to establish a kind of university in every department, for which the young men were to be prepared by means of a sufficient number of inferior schools scattered through the department. But these inferior schools have never been generally established or endowed; and even the central schools themselves have never been entirely supplied with proper masters. Indeed it would have been impossible to have furnished such a number of masters at once. On that account an institution was established at

Paris under the name of Normal School, for the express purpose of educating a sufficient number of masters to supply the different central schools. Fourcroy lived however to see the whole in as good a train of establishment as the extent of the undertaking, and the wars in which France has been obliged to defend her existence, would admit.

As member of the Convention, or of the Council of Ancients, Fourcroy took an active part in all those institutions. He was also concerned in the establishment of the Institute, and of the *Museum d' Histoire Naturelle*. This last was endowed by the imperial government with the utmost liberality, and Fourcroy was one of the first professors; as he also was in the School of Medicine, and in the Polytechnic School. He was equally concerned in the restoration of the University of Paris, which constitutes a splendid part of Bonaparte's reign, and which will be long remembered with applause. The violent exertions which M. de Fourcroy made in the numerous situations which he filled, and the prodigious activity which he displayed, gradually undermined his constitution. He was himself sensible of his approaching death, and announced it to his friends as an event which would speedily take place. On the 16th of December, 1809, after signing some despatches, he suddenly cried out, *Je suis mort*, and dropt lifeless on the ground.

He was twice married: first to Mademoiselle Bettinger, by whom he had two children; a son, an officer in the artillery, who inherits his title; and a daughter Madame Foucand. He was married a second time to Madame Bellville, the widow of Vailly, by whom he had no family.

The character of M. de Fourcroy

was exactly fitted to the country in which he lived, and the revolutionary government in which he finished his career. His occupations were too numerous, and his elocution too ready, to allow him either to make profound discoveries, or compose treatises of great depth or originality. The changes which took place in the science of chemistry were brought about by others, who were placed in a different situation, and endowed with different talents; but no man contributed so much as Fourcroy to the popularity of the Lavoisierian opinions, and the rapidity with which they were propagated through France, and most countries in Europe. His eloquence drew crowds to hear him, and he persuaded his audience to embrace his opinions.

He possessed an uncommon facility in writing, for his literary labours are exceedingly numerous. Besides his Essays, he published five editions of his *System of Chemistry*, each gradually increasing in size and value; the first edition being in two volumes, and the fifth in ten. The last edition, written in sixteen months, contains a vast quantity of valuable matter, and contributed considerably to the general diffusion of chemical knowledge. Perhaps the best of all Fourcroy's productions is his *Philosophy of Chemistry*, which is remarkable for its conciseness, its perspicuity, and the neatness of its arrangement. Besides these works, and the periodical work called *Le Médecin Eclairé*, of which he was the editor, there are above one hundred and sixty papers on chemical subjects, with his name attached to them as the author, in the *Memoirs of the Academy*, the *Institute*, in the *Annales de Chimie*, or the *Annales de Museum d'Histoire Naturelle*, of which last work he was the projector.

The following is a summary of his chief labours and discoveries, according to Dr. Thompson.

1. He repeated the curious experiments of Berthollet upon the evolution of azotic gas from animal substances.

2. He ascertained that ammonia is decomposed by the oxides of manganese, mercury, and iron; and that these oxides, at the same time, lose either the whole or a portion of their oxygen.

2. He ascertained that the most common constituent of biliary calculi, is a substance very similar in its properties to spermaceti.

4. He found that vegetable juices frequently contain a substance which conglutates when the juice is exposed to a gentle heat.

5. He ascertained the properties of several triple salts, which magnesia, and ammonia, and an acid, are capable of forming.

6. He published a very elaborate analysis of the quinquina, a species of bark from St. Domingo, which was considered at the time as a model for vegetable analysis.

7. His experiments on the brain contain several valuable facts, and his opinion approaches to accuracy.

8. The analysis of tears, and the mucus of the nose, by Fourcroy and Vauquelin, is valuable.

9. The analysis of urine, and of urinary calculi, by the same gentlemen, has been much admired.

10. A method of obtaining barytes in a state of purity, by exposing the nitrate of barytes to a red heat in a porcelain crucible.

11. He and Vauquelin ascertained by experiment that the three liquids, known by the names of pyromucous, pyrolignous, and pyrotartarous acids, are vinegar holding in solution a portion of empyreumatic oil.

12. They ascertained the presence

of phosphate of magnesia in the bones of all animals.

13. They discovered a quantity of uncombined phosphorus in the melts of fishes. They shewed, likewise, an analogy between the pollen of the antheræ of some flowers, and the seminal fluid of animals.

14. They detected in the common onion the presence of a considerable quantity of saccharine matter, and showed by experiment that this saccharine matter was converted into manna by a spontaneous change.

15. They ascertained the properties of animal mucus, and showed that it differed from all other animal substances. *Phillips' Monthly Magazine.*

DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ.

At Belvedere, in Somersetshire, aged 83, died David Hartley, esq. A. M. Senior Fellow of Merton College in Oxford, and Father of the University. The latter part of Mr. Hartley's life had been devoted to a literary retirement; and about five years ago, that infirmity which is the common and inevitable attendant on extreme old age, had drawn him into close seclusion. The character of Mr. Hartley was marked by distinction both in public and private life. On the death of his father, the celebrated Metaphysician, he relinquished the views of a profession, and passing into the senate, became the laborious servant of the public. During many parliaments he signalized himself as the ardent and indefatigable advocate of the rights of his countrymen, and the universal liberties of mankind. During the fatal struggle with the Colonies, he fought under the banners of Lord Rockingham, and by the side of Sir George Savile. At the close of that ever memorable conflict, it was his peculiar felicity

to be selected by the Crown, to negotiate with Dr. Franklin the terms of the recognition of that independence, which he had so strenuously maintained in the house of Commons; and as Minister Plenipotentiary he signed at Paris, in the year 1783, the definitive Treaty with the United States of America. As a public speaker, Mr. Hartley was always animated, always powerful; his elocution was correct and fluent; his action masculine and graceful; and in one feature he was peculiarly distinguished above all others—the brilliant melody of his tones. As a Legislator, it will be recorded to his imperishable fame, that he was the first mover for the abolition of the African Slave Trade, “as a violation of the Laws of God, and the Rights of Man.” The result of his deep philosophical researches, particularly in the branches of chemistry and mechanics, were productive of some signal advantages to society; the chief of which was, his invention for securing buildings from fire. In private life, Mr. Hartley was truly amiable: his deportment was dignified and unostentatious; his manners had received that high polish which is acquired only by habitual intercourse with the great and good of each sex in the respectable circles of society: his private charities were secret and systematic; and that benevolence which glowed in the complexion of his whole character, was the certain offspring of those studies into which he had been initiated by the precepts and the example of his amiable and illustrious father.

Phillips' Monthly Magazine.

WILLIAM WOOD, ESQ.

On the 17th of December, at March Hall, near Shrewsbury, died W. Wood, Esq. He must be long remembered as a man of great acquired talents, and most astonishing